



Montana Board of Research and Commercialization Technology

Request for Proposals

Research and Commercialization Projects

Fiscal Year 2008 Guidelines

December 8, 2006

Introduction

The Montana Board of Research and Commercialization Technology encourages economic development through investment in research and commercialization projects. The board has about \$2.9 million available to grant in fiscal year 2008 (7/1/07 – 6/30/08) for such projects. The emphasis of the program is on projects that lead to marketable products or processes. Projects must be matched with non-Montana state government funds at an amount equal to at least 25% of the total project cost.

This is a highly competitive funding program. To maximize the possibility of obtaining funding, applicants should carefully follow the instructions in this Request for Proposals. Incomplete proposals may be dropped from consideration.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are Montana-based research and commercialization centers. Research and commercialization centers are statutorily defined as the campuses of the University of Montana or Montana State University, tribal colleges, colleges of technology, community colleges, agricultural research centers, or private laboratories or research centers.

Application Deadlines

The submission deadline is March 1, 2007, 5:00 p.m. at the Helena office. Funding decisions are anticipated for July 2007. Applicants must submit nine copies of the proposal.

The next application deadline is expected to be on or around March 1, 2008.

I. Application

Requirements for a Research and Commercialization Grant

The application should be submitted as two separate parts: An executive summary and the project proposal/commercialization plan. The executive summary should be physically separate from the project proposal/commercialization plan. Any information considered confidential by the applicant should not be included in the executive summary. Both parts will constitute the entire application to be reviewed by the board.

Confidentiality – All documents submitted to the Board are subject to the right of citizens to inspect and copy pursuant to section 2-6-102, MCA, unless there is an individual privacy interest that clearly exceeds the merits of public disclosure. Pursuant to the Montana Supreme Court’s decision in *Great Falls Tribune v. Public Service Commission*, 319 Mont. 38, 82 P.3d 876 (2003), all documents filed with the Board by the applicant are presumptively available for access by the public under the “right to know” provision of Article 2, Section 9 of the Montana Constitution. If a request to inspect and/or copy submitted documents is made by a third party, the burden is on the applicant to obtain a court order to prevent the release of confidential information.

Executive Summary – The executive summary must contain in a clearly marked fashion the following items in the order listed below:

1. In two pages or less (the two-page limit applies to the four items (a) – (d) listed below), a summary of the proposed project, including:
 - (a) Description of the proposal
 - (b) Explanation of the technology involved
 - (c) Description of any new products or processes that might be developed
 - (d) Explanation of why the proposal is important and should be funded
2. An explanation of how the project meets each of the following statutory project criteria:
 - (a) Has potential to diversify or add value to a traditional basic industry of the state’s economy
 - (b) Shows promise for enhancing technology-based sectors of Montana’s economy or for the commercial development of discoveries

- (c) Employs or otherwise takes advantage of existing research and commercialization strengths within the state's public university system and private research establishment
 - (d) Involves a realistic and achievable research project design
 - (e) Develops or employs an innovative technology
 - (f) Is located in Montana
 - (g) The research team possesses sufficient expertise in the appropriate technology area to complete the research objective
 - (h) Has received financial support based on its scientific merits following review by a recognized federal agency, philanthropic foundation, or other private funding source
 - (i) Includes research opportunities for students
3. An indication of whether the project enhances production agriculture. If it does, a brief explanation of how should be included.
 4. A description of whether the grant is to be used for basic research, applied research, or some combination of both. Applied research is defined as research that is conducted to attain a specific benefit or solve a practical problem, and basic research is defined as research that is conducted to uncover the basic function or mechanism of a scientific question.
 5. A statement of whether matching funds are currently available, and if not, how, where and when they might be obtained.
 6. An estimate of the total financing needs.
 7. The amount of funds requested from the board, with a description of the expected use of proceeds.
 8. Whether or not an external peer review has been conducted.

The executive summary should not contain any information that the applicant does not want subject to public inspection.



Project Proposal – This portion of the application should be organized as follows:

- Title Page – Include the name and complete contact information of the Principal Investigator, and whether the proposal is a continuation of a project previously funded by the board.
- Table of Contents
- Project Description
- Commercialization Plan

If a proposal for this project has been prepared for another agency, that application may be substituted for the project proposal. However, if any of the following items are not addressed they must be added separately. The applicant must clearly indicate in the Table of Contents where each of the following items one through eight and the commercialization plan are found in the project proposal.

The project description must contain the items listed below:

1. A clear statement of proposed objectives (no more than one page).
2. A concise review of the background information and technology relevant to the project.
3. A description of the project design. This should be sufficiently detailed so that a knowledgeable reviewer can assess whether the project is scientifically/technically sound and its likelihood of success.
4. The results of external peer review, if any. Copies of scores and written critiques should be included. Peer reviews are required for projects receiving grant funding.
5. A list of required facilities and equipment.
6. A list of performance benchmarks with target dates.
7. An itemized budget, with documentation showing all sources of funds and a justification for the use of proceeds for each line of the budget. Board funds cannot be used for the payment of institutional overhead or other indirect costs of the Montana university system. Please use the attached budget form.
8. The resumes of the major principals identified in the project design describing the education and employment experience of each.

Commercialization Plan – This should include a product description, a description of the target market including its size, strategy for marketing the product, product pricing considerations, a manufacturing or production plan, and a business risk assessment. Proposals that can show a direct and realistic path to commercialization are favored.

II. Proposal Review Process

Peer Review of Proposals

As required by statute, external peer review of grant proposals is mandatory. The board may accept the results of the competitive peer review process conducted by a federal or private granting agency. However, the board may seek additional peer review if deemed necessary.

Staff Review of Proposals

Staff review of the proposal will verify compliance with the statutory purpose and criteria, and may address other issues as determined by the board.

Presentation of Proposals

The board may ask the applicant to make a presentation of the proposal in person at a board meeting, or the board may request a visit at the site where the project will be carried out.

III. Funding Decision

Board Decision

In its evaluation of each proposal the board will take into consideration the number of, and the degree to which statutory criteria are met. In addition, the board will take into consideration the stated statutory purpose, the goals and objectives of the proposal, the applicant's presentation and the staff report. Based on these factors, the board will determine whether the proposal should be approved for a grant, whether the proposal should be modified, or whether the proposal should be denied.

If the board is satisfied with the quality and goals of the proposal but the required external peer review has not been completed, the board may decide to fund external peer review of the proposal. Upon completion of external peer review, the proposal will be reevaluated.

Reconsideration of Board Decision

If the board determines that a proposal is ineligible for a grant due to failure to comply with applicable statutory criteria and other criteria, the applicant has thirty days from receipt of notification of such determination to request that the board reconsider the proposal.

IV. Funding Agreement

The board may disburse the funds outlined in the funding agreement according to performance benchmarks or other requirements as determined by the board.

The funding recipient must submit progress reports to the board as required in the funding agreement. The progress reports shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Financial status of the project
2. Overall project performance
3. Progress in accomplishing performance benchmarks

A final report is due upon completion of the project term.

The required matching funds must be in the possession of the applicant at the time grant funds are disbursed.

For additional information, contact:

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Montana Board of Research and Commercialization Technology Budget Form

Project Year One (Use additional sheets if more than one year of funding is being requested.)

Project Title:

Principal Investigator:

Budget Item	R&C Funds	Matching Funds	Other Funds	Total
Salaries				\$
Payroll Benefits				\$
Repair and Maintenance				\$
Travel				\$
Communications				\$
Contracted Services				\$
Supplies and Materials				\$
Rent				\$
Equipment				\$
Subcontracts				\$
Awards				\$
Participant Support Costs				\$
Facilities and Administrative Costs				\$
Total	\$	\$	\$	\$

Note: Any funds in the “Matching Funds” column must be from non-Montana state government sources.

Montana Board of Research and Commercialization Technology Matching Funds Form

Project Year One (Use additional sheets if more than one year of funding is being requested.)

Project Title:

Principal Investigator:

Source of Matching Funds	Amount Applied to Proposal
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
	\$
Total	\$

Note: The total funds in the “Amount Applied to Proposal” column should equal the total funds in the “Matching Funds” column in the above Budget Form.